



Indiana Historical Bureau

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NEWS

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“Red Skelton” Indiana State Historical Marker Will Be Dedicated in Vincennes, Indiana

A public dedication ceremony for an Indiana state historical marker commemorating comedian, actor, and humanitarian Red Skelton, is scheduled for Friday, July 14, 2017. The marker dedication will begin at 5:30 pm at 111 West Lyndale Ave., Vincennes. Parking for the event will be available along the adjacent streets.

The text follows for the state marker entitled **“One of America’s Clowns / Red Skelton”**:

Comedian Richard “Red” Skelton was born here in 1913. As a teenager, performed locally in minstrel shows and as a clown in circus. By 1930s he performed on vaudeville stages; became famous for skits such as “dunking donuts.” MGM signed Skelton to a film contract in 1940, advancing his comedy career. He solidified fame in 1941 with debut of his national NBC radio show. During WWII, Skelton served in the U.S. Army and performed numerous comedy shows for troops. In 1951, he helped popularize television with The Red Skelton Show, which aired for 20 years and won multiple Emmy Awards. Skelton was remembered for on-screen characters like Freddie the Freeloader and for his iconic interpretation of the Pledge of Allegiance. He died 1997.

The public is invited to attend the dedication ceremony for this Indiana state historical marker that celebrates Skelton’s long career and contributions in entertainment. Skelton became a comedic star on stage, radio, film, and television. On the anniversary of his 100th birthday on July 18, 2013, his hometown of Vincennes, Indiana opened the Red Skelton Museum of American Comedy dedicated to sharing his legacy of laughter. This year marks the 20th anniversary of Skelton’s passing.

Special guests at the historical marker dedication ceremony on July 14th include Anne Pratt, Director of the Red Skelton Museum Foundation, Mark Hill, Chairman of the Board, Mayor Joe Yochum of the City of Vincennes, Lothian Skelton, Red Skelton’s wife, Doug Carroll, Board member, and Tony Cardinal, former owner of Skelton’s birthplace house.

State historical markers commemorate significant individuals, organizations, places, and events in Indiana history. These markers help communities throughout the state promote, preserve, and present their history for the education and enjoyment of residents and tourists of all ages. For over 100 years the Indiana Historical Bureau, an agency of the State of Indiana, has been marking Indiana history. Since 1946, the marker format has been the large roadside marker, which has the familiar dark blue background with gold lettering and the outline of the state of Indiana at the top. Over 600 of these markers have been installed over the years.

For more information about the Indiana Historical Marker Program and other resources about Indiana, visit the Indiana Historical Bureau’s website at <http://www.IN.gov/history> or call (317) 232-2535. For more information about the marker dedication ceremony commemorating Red Skelton, please contact Mark Kratzner at mkratzner@vinu.edu. And to read more about the other events that weekend, including dinner with Mrs. Skelton, the 12th annual Red Skelton Festival, and the Clowning with Red exhibit, see www.RedSkeltonMuseum.org.